

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 3-10, 12-14, 16-17, 19-31, 35-45, 49-55

remain in the application for further prosecution. Claims 11, 32-34, and 46-48 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 5, 7, 12, 14, 17, 23, 25, 27, 28, 31, 35, 37, 40, 41, 43, 44, 49, and 50 have been amended. The Applicant thanks the Examiner for allowance of claims 14, 16 and 51-55.

Independent Claims 1 and 17

Independent claims 1 and 17 have been amended to address the Examiner's rejections based on 35 U.S.C. §112. Specifically, these claims have been amended to clarify that it is the predetermined flange coupling interface of the adaptor that is configured to mate with any of the flanges (on the opposed adaptor side). Therefore, claims 1 and 17, and their dependents, are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Independent Claim 9

Independent claim 9 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 11, which the Examiner indicated was allowable. Therefore, claim 9 and its dependents are now believed to be in condition for allowance.

Independent Claim 14

Independent claim 14 has been amended to insert the term "one of said" before "standard flange interface" as suggested by the Examiner. Therefore, claim 14 and its dependent is believed to be in condition for allowance.

Independent Claim 25

Independent claim 25 has been amended to include the limitations of claims 32, 33, and 34, which the Examiner indicated would place the claim in condition for allowance. Therefore, claim 25 and its dependents are now believed to be allowable.

Independent Claim 37

Independent claim 37 has been amended to include the limitations of claims 46, 47, and 48, which the Examiner indicated would place the claim in condition for allowance. Therefore, claim 37 and its dependents are believed to be allowable.

Dependent Claims 3-8, 19-24, 26-36, 38-50

These dependent claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112. These claims have been amended as suggested by the Examiner.

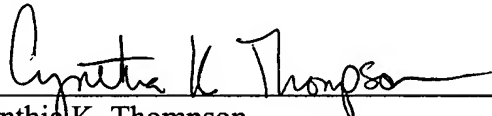
Conclusion

It is the Applicants' belief that all of the claims are now in condition for allowance and action towards that effect is respectfully requested.

If there are any matters which may be resolved or clarified through a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the number indicated.

Respectfully submitted,

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